1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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a description of the country which seems to be accurate (130, vol. 2, p. 238): "The aspect of Easter Island is not so barren and disgusting as navigators have told us. It is indeed almost destitute of wood, but the hills and valleys exhibit, in the eyes of seamen at least, a most agreeable verdure. The size and goodness of their potatoes, yams, sugar canes, etc. are proofs of great fertility and strong vegetation."

Contrary to their predecessors, the travelers of the nineteenth century who saw Easter Island were impressed by its apparent fertility and the richness of its plantations. Delano (5, p. 356) says of the west coast in the year 1804: "The greatest part of the island had the appearance of being capable of cultivations, and much of it was cultivated in beautiful plantations." Lisiansky (143, pp. 52-54) finds that "the eastern part of Easter Island is very pleasant. It is covered with verdure and many spots of it appeared to be planted with bananas. . . The neighborhood of the last two mentioned monuments (Vinapu) contained a greater number of habitations, and seemed better cultivated than any other spot we had yet seen. . . . The northern side appeared to be but thinly inhabited." Choris (48, p. 11) writes in 1822: "The aspect of the island was rather arid, but it appeared to us less miserable than to Cook or La Pérouse. All the higher slopes were divided in fields planted with various vegetables, whose varied nuances produced a very pleasant effect." Beechey (15, pp. 41-42) observes that the valleys were well cultivated and that the greatest attention appeared to be paid to tilling the soil. Palmer (169, p. 374) had the impression that everything was in ruins, though there were evidences of former cultivation.

In spite of Roussel's judgment (190, p. 495) to the contrary, Easter Island is fertile. Skottsberg (208, vol. 2, p. 488), our best authority on the subject, states that "where there is sufficient soil this is of good quality and quite fertile when properly cultivated, and in prehistoric and early historic times extensive plantations existed supporting a population of several thousands."

The present-day population of 456 souls is concentrated in the village of Hanga-roa. They cultivate the neighboring fields at the foot of Rano-kao and Rano-aroi. According to Mr. Edmunds, former manager of the island, two acres are necessary to support a whole family, and I am convinced that his statement is correct.

It is important to determine, as far as possible, the extent of cultivable land on Easter Island, for on this may be based an estimate of the number of inhabitants and in turn the probability that they could accomplish such a huge project as the carving of the famous statues. From a study of reports of ancient travelers and from my own observations of the island resources, I am convinced that three or four thousand natives could live on the island without fear of hunger except in time of war.

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POPULATION

The estimates of population made by the early voyagers are only approximate, based on the number of natives they happened to see at the anchorage and on brief reconnoitering expeditions ashore.

Roggeveen (186, p. 11) vaguely refers to "the great number of natives," but he saw only two or three old women while ashore (1772); and Behrens (18, vol. 1, p. 125), who always exaggerates, speaks of thousands of natives "swimming in the water."

In 1770 Gonzalez (90, p. 93) estimated that there were more than 800 natives posted on the heights or along the shore on the north side of the island between Ovahe and La Pérouse. Four hundred natives visited his ship (90, p. 100). A member of the expedition who circumnavigated the island puts the entire population at 900 to 1,000 (90, p. 127). So few women were seen that the Spaniards believed that there were only about 70 women on the entire island. Children were not seen. In a letter of Dalrymple (90, p. 45) mentioning the Gonzalez expedition, the total population of the island is given as 3,000.

When Captain Cook's party landed in 1774, G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 577) calculated that there were 200 in the crowd at the shore, of which only 15 were women and a few were children. Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 289) estimated the total population at 600 to 700 of which two thirds were males. J. R. Forster (84, p. 423) assumed that the total population was 900 and says that he saw only 50 women; he concluded that the population had decreased rapidly since the visit of Gonzalez and was on the verge of extinction. As Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 289) suggested, the natives were undoubtedly frightened by the arrival of foreigners and hid their women in inland caves as was done during wartime (p. 192).

When La Pérouse landed at Hanga-roa in 1786, he was met by a crowd of about 800, 150 of whom were women. He expressed the opinion that the total population was around 2,000 and concluded, from the number of houses and children, that it was not on the decline.

Population figures given by nineteenth century voyagers are even less accurate than those of earlier explorers, for none of them stayed on the island for more than a few minutes. Their estimates are merely guesses made from a distance and generally for only a part of the island. Figures given by missionaries after 1864 are fairly reliable.

Lisiansky in 1804 (143, p. 60) estimated the total population at 1,500, based on the number of habitations seen and the number of natives assembled at Hanga-roa Bay.

Delano (5, p. 356) in 1808 saw 500 or 600 natives along the north coast and 200 or 300 near where he tried to land on the west coast.

In 1816 when Kotzebue tried unsuccessfully to land, Choris (48, p. 12) guessed that there were 900 gathered on the beach at Hanga-roa, of whom only two were women.

In 1825 Beechey's officers (15, vol. 1, p. 51) put the total population at 1,500.

Captain Lejeune (165, vol. 28, p. 45) of the *Cassini* reported seeing between 1,200 and 1,400 natives in the summer of 1862. There must have been at least 2,000, however, for in 1864, after slave raids and many deaths from smallpox, there were still 1,200 natives to greet Eyraud.

Shortly after Lejeune's visit in 1862, Easter Island was raided by Peruvian slavers who took from 800 to 1,000 natives by force to Peru (115, p. 242; 165, p. 49). The few men who returned introduced smallpox and during 1863 the mortality on the island was great.

In his first letter from the island, Eyraud (81) speaks of a crowd of 1,200 men, women, and children surrounding him on the shore. The entire population at that time is said to have been nearly 2,000.

In 1866, Zumbohm (230, vol. 5, p. 663), who was also a missionary on the island, estimated the entire population at 1,000, and believed that it once reached 4,000.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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Roussel (190, p. 426) states that a census taken between 1867 and 1870 showed a total population of 650. He believes that the population was never more than 5,000 or 6,000 because the interior of the island was never inhabited.

In 1869 Powell (180, p. 142) estimated the population at 800, and Palmer (169, p. 372) at 900 of whom one third were women.

In 1870 Gana (86) reported the population at about 600.

The disproportion of the sexes in the last half of the nineteenth century is not exaggerated. Roussel, who knew the island well, states that formerly the number of women exceeded the number of men but that women seemed more susceptible to smallpox and tuberculosis and that "out of three dead two are females." That this disproportion was abnormal is proved by native testimony and the present balance between male and female birth rates. Geiseler (87, p. 22) attributes the disproportion and the falling birth rate to the past, for he had heard that long before white contact there was but one woman to every five men. Disease may have been introduced by infrequent visits of whalers who before 1830 had contaminated the island with syphilis (162, p. 26).

The smallpox epidemic apparently ceased after the arrival of the missionaries, but mortality was still high and the population continued to diminish. Roussel (190, p. 427) gives a reason for this that is worth considering:

I know of no other reason for the decrease of the population other than deprivations of all sorts, the humidity of the huts, the bad air of the winter season, their immorality and their extreme imprudence in living with sick people. To frighten them with the threat of death is just useless. They do not care for life. They fear death as little as they like their relatives. As long as they hope to save a sick person they take care of him, but if the disease becomes serious, they abandon him and pay no attention to his requests or wants.

As a matter of fact the only disease on Rapa-nui is scrofula, but it seems to be very different from the ordinary kind. They suffer from dysentery, but so rarely that it is not dangerous. We had only two cases of tetanus and they were fatal, one case of apoplexy and one of cerebral congestion.

Bates (86, p. 51), the surgeon of the *O'Higgins* who visited the island in 1870, attributes the great mortality of the population to scrofula and consumption. He considers that premature marriages affected the birth rate. It is hard to tell exactly what he means by "scrofula" which he says was common among children, whereas adults died of "pulmonary ailments."

The lack of hygiene and the free sexual life of the girls cannot be considered as serious factors in the depopulation. Smallpox probably made the greatest ravages among young people, so that there is nothing surprising in the continued decrease in birth rate even after the epidemics were over. In addition to the other calamities war broke out among the islanders and was followed by a period of famine. In 1866, Ollivier (165, vol. 39, p. 257) wrote that the mortality caused by misery and famine was very high and that the missionaries had to take care of a great many orphans.

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167 The steady decrease in the population culminated in 1871 when most of the natives left for Tahiti and Mangareva. The exact number of those who abandoned their homes that year is difficult to ascertain. Jaussen (113, p. 385) says that 231 Easter Islanders were working on Brander's plantations and that 50 (some other sources say about 100) stayed in Mangareva with the missionaries. By 1873, 100 of the 231 had died. The number of the emigrants to Tahiti estimated by Thomson (215, p. 461) and Geiseler (87, p. 19) as 400 or 500 is certainly exaggerated, since they say that 300 or 400 were also transferred to Mangareva. In 1900 the Easter Islanders in Tahiti were only 44—21 men, 11 women, and 13 children (7, p. 84). I do not know the present number.

161 The following table tabulates all available population figures for the period 1872 to 1934. This includes inaccurate estimates made by missionaries and visitors as well as careful censuses.

161 The present population is concentrated in the village of Hanga-roa and occupies 2,000 hectares. This area, granted to the natives by the government, is small but sufficient for their needs. Only the fields in and around Hanga-roa are cultivated but the need of more land has never been felt. It might even be said that the natives could produce far beyond their wants if they cared to. If 456 natives can live easily on a small portion of the island which is not particularly fertile it may be assumed that eight or nine times that number could have made a comfortable living on the entire island. Formerly fishing was a more important food resource than it is now. I believe that the population of Easter Island a hundred years ago must have been between 3,000 and 4,000. Meyer and Jablonowski (160, p. 6), who have investigated carefully the population of Easter Island, propose the same figure. If the population was about 3,000 before the coming of the white men it gives a density of 13.7 persons to one square kilometer, about the same number as that for Tahiti.

164 Leprosy is the only disease endemic to the island. In 1934 there were 22 lepers confined in a separate hut. During the five months we spent on the island all the other natives were examined by Dr. Drapkin who found them in excellent health, with the exception of a few cases of tuberculosis. Venereal diseases are rare and only three or four cases of blennorrhea have been reported. Natives are very susceptible to pulmonary infection. The visit of any boat is invariably followed by an epidemic of influenza or bronchitis. Although surgeons of a warship inspect the island at intervals the natives were vaccinated for the first time during our stay on the island.

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1: Metraux E5 (1934-1935) 1940
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TABLE 1. POPULATION OF EASTER ISLAND, 1872-1934

	Adults M	Adults F	Children M	Children F	Total for Island	Foreigners included in total	Remarks	Source of information
1872		55			175			De Lapelin (129), Janssen (113)
1877		26			111		minimum recorded population	Pinart (178, p. 238)
1882	67	39	44, both sexes		150			Geiseler (87, p. 19)
1886	68	43	17	27	155	6 Tahitians, 5 Europeans	population at standstill, births equaling deaths	Census given by Salmon to Thomson (215, p. 461) and Cooke (54, p. 712)
1888	100	78			178	12 Chilean colonists	58 men over 30; 28 women over 30	Policarpo Toro
1890					188		in 15 months, 6 died, 9 emigrated, 9 were born, and 15 returned from Tahiti	
1892	112	89			201			Meyer and Jablonowski (160, p. 5)
1897					250	40 Chileans	inaccurate	Eich (69, p. 415)
1900	64		44	41	213	12 Chileans, 2 Englishmen, 1 Frenchman, 1 Italian		Butaye
1911	114	114			228			Census taken by *Baquedano*
1912					248		this rapid increase has continued up to the present	Knoche (123, p. 156)
1916					273			
1917					301	3 Europeans, 5 or 6 Tahitians, 21 Chileans	in 9 months, 3 persons died and 12 children were born	Knoche (123, p. 156)
1918					260		probably inaccurate	Estella (79, pp. 60-64)
1922	156	142	123 under 10 45 under 3		298	2 Europeans, 6 Chileans	1 woman 100 yrs. old, 9 men of about 80, 26 persons over 50	Knoche (123, p. 157)
1934	65	85	163	143	456		only 159 are of exclusive Easter Island origin; 297 have some Tahitian, Chilean, Tuamotuan, German, French, English, Chinese, American, or Italian blood	Drapkin (62)

3:Drapkin D-5 (1934-1935) 1935
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CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF EASTER ISLAND*

By I. Drapkin, M.D.

INTRODUCTION

This demographic study is part of a series of undertakings carried out on the spot by the Franco-Belgian Scientific Expedition, under the direction of Mr. A. Métraux, from July 1934 to January 1935. In my capacity as doctor, delegated by the Chilean Government, I took charge of all the researches concerning demography, the sanitary condition of the natives, as well as the formation of natural science collections. 121

The various data which I endeavored to bring together, systematically arranged, doubtless will contribute to the presentation of a correct idea of the actual demographic condition of the indigenous population of this island.

CENSUS

Most of the navigators who have visited Easter Island since Roggeveen have made varied and conflicting estimates of the number of the inhabitants. As these estimates had to do with impressions rather than observations founded on exact facts, one should not fail to take that into account. 161 175

The first actual census of the population of Easter Island was made at the end of 1886 by Mr. A. A. Salmon, who had arrived a short time before on the American warship *Mohican*. According to Salmon, there were then 155 natives grouped as follows: 162

Children Under 15 Years	
Male	17
Female	27
Adults	
Male	68
Female	43
Total	155

Thomson,[1] to whom we owe these valuable facts, adds that the number of the natives remained the same during many years, with a 161 175

* Translated by Margaret Titcomb, Librarian, Bernice P. Bishop Museum.

[1] Thompson, William J., Te pito te henua or Easter Island: Smithsonian Inst., Nat. Mus., Rept., pp. 460-461, 1888-89.

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3:Drapkin D-5 (1934-1935) 1935
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perfect equilibrium between the births and the deaths. He remarks also that examples of longevity are more frequent in Easter Island than in more favored regions. At this time the oldest man was a chief named Mati, whose exact age was unknown, but both he and his wife must have been 90 years old.

Mrs. Routledge,[2] but especially Knoche,[3] give us in their works on Easter Island certain statistics which I consider necessary to quote here.

In 1900, there were 213 inhabitants. In 1911, there were 228, the two sexes equal in number. In 1912, there were 248, and in 1914, 250. In 1916, the population had reached 273.

In 1917, the total population of Easter Island was 301 inhabitants. This number included 3 Europeans, 18 Chileans, and 280 Polynesians, setting aside the question of the pure blood of these last. During 9 months of this year, there were 3 deaths and 12 births.

Until 1922 the situation remained stationary, with the exception of slight fluctuations. There were then 298 inhabitants, among whom were 2 Europeans, 4 Chileans, and 11 of mixed blood, half-foreign. Sexes were divided as follows: 156 men and 142 women. There were 46 children under 3 years, 123 children under 10 years, 26 persons over 50 years, and 9 persons over 80 years.

Our census of Easter Island gives, on December 31, 1934, the sum total of 456 natives. I have not included in my statistics the 13 whites who actually live there. These are 1 Frenchman, married to a native, who has lived in the island for 40 years; an Italian, who has been there for 30 years; an Englishman, administrator of the Easter Island Produce Company, with his wife and two sons; another Englishman, subadministrator of the same company; six Chileans, who are the Maritime Commissioner, supreme authority in the island, his wife, his son, the head of the school at Hanga Roa, and two women married to natives.

According to age the natives may be divided into five categories:

	Male	Female	Total
Infants under 2 years	32	21	53
Children from 3 to 12 years	86	77	163
Adolescents from 13 to 20 years	45	45	90
Adults from 21 to 50 years	61	67	128
Adults 50 and over	4	18	22
Total	228	228	456

Two interesting facts deserve attention: first, the perfect equilib-

[2] Routledge, Mrs. Scoresby, The mystery of Easter Island, London, p. 149, 1919.
[3] Knoche, Walter, Die Osterinsel, Concepción, Chile, pp. 154-157.

3:Drapkin D-5 (1934-1935) 1935
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rium existing between the number of individuals of both sexes, not only in the total number, but also at most of the different stages of life (45 adolescents of the two sexes, for instance); secondly, the large number of old women compared with the old men—only 4 old men over 50, but 18 old women, one of them almost 95 years old (Paulina Viriamo).

DENSITY

Easter Island has an area of approximately 17,900 hectares. The natives have the use of only 2,000 hectares, for the other 15,900 hectares belong to the Produce Company, by virtue of a concession. If from these 2,000 hectares are deducted the government lands and such establishments as roads, the common, the church, school, cemetery, the land of the Commissioner, etc., the extent of the land actually belonging to the natives is reduced to 1,800 hectares, which results in a density of 4 inhabitants to a hectare.

The comparison between the census of Salmon in 1886 and ours in 1934 brings a realization of the rapid increase of the population, which has tripled in less than a half century. The portion of public land occupied by the natives is not one of the most favored for agriculture. If the increase in population continues according to the same rhythm the day will come when the establishment of future families will constitute a veritable problem.

PURE-BLOODED AND MIXED-BLOODED INDIVIDUALS

To distinguish between Easter Islanders of pure and mixed blood is an undertaking not only difficult but indeed impossible. During the whole course of the nineteenth century the island was visited by a great number of ships, the crews of which, on account of the liberty of Polynesian customs, were able to have sex relations with the natives. To these occasional associations there have been added all those which have occurred after the foreign occupation.

It is easy to understand that under such conditions it may be difficult to make a distinction which can claim to be precise between the direct descendants of the old inhabitants and those of mixed blood. Nevertheless, in the hope of making a more or less correct classification, I have resorted to the following method. Taking as a basis the personal information supplied by the individuals themselves, and corroborated by the testimony of the oldest natives and those most reliable in the community, I have considered as pure those who for

4:Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1945
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EASTER ISLAND[1]

By ALFRED MÉTRAUX
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[With 4 plates]

A treeless volcanic rock, scarcely 13 miles long and 7 miles wide, slowly being eaten away by the waves and lost in the great emptiness of the Pacific Ocean—2,000 miles off the coast of Chile and 1,500 miles from the nearest Polynesian archipelago—this is Easter Island, the most isolated spot ever inhabited by man. Today it supports a mere handful of natives, mostly half-castes, and many of them lepers. These 450 people, now under Chilean rule, are the only descendants of the men who created there one of the most original civilizations that have left a trace behind. Yet they have all but forgotten their past.

For two centuries, the name of the island has been almost synonymous with mystery. In the world of ethnologists it occupies a place much like that of isles of fancy in children's imaginations.

The sense of mystery which still surrounds this lonely rock was first aroused on Easter Sunday, 1722, when the Dutch Admiral Roggeveen, in command of three frigates cruising about the Pacific in search of the fabulous Davis Land, saw the dome-shaped peaks of its volcanoes jutting above the horizon. From the decks of their ships his sailors, as they drew nearer, could discern all along the cliffs of this unknown shore an army of gigantic statues, which completely overshadowed a small band of naked and noisy savages on the beach below. The visit of the Dutch discoverers did not last long, but they carried back to Europe the strange tale of a solitary, desolate island guarded by colossal stone images, far too heavy and impressive to have been carved and erected by the few primitive people they found living there.

Later in the eighteenth century, and afterward, Easter Island was visited in succession by several other great navigators: Cook, La Pérouse, Kotzebue, Beechey. They, too, saw with amazement the stone monsters, measured them, and even sketched them. To their

[1] Reprinted by permission from The Yale Review, Summer 1939, with revisions and additions by the author. The illustrations did not appear in The Yale Review.

4:Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1945
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mulberry, which the natives grew in special stone-enclosed plots. Perhaps the wood necessary for making sledges on which the statues might have been hauled was lumber that floated ashore. This is frequently mentioned in ancient tales. If native timber or driftwood was available in the old days, the difficulties of transportation would not have been overwhelming. We know that other Polynesians transported objects quite as heavy as the Easter Island images. For instance in the Marquesas, slabs weighing as much as 10 tons were hauled along the slopes of the mountains. The famous doorway, or trilithon, of Tonga, which is one of the marvels of the world, has a lintel weighing 30 tons. But when the Easter Islanders of today are asked about the means by which the statues were transported, they only say: "King Tuu-ko-ihu, the great magician, used to move them with the words of his mouth."

Other questions have arisen about the Easter Island carvings. How, for instance, did the people get the manpower for such large enterprises, which would have been impossible, it seems, if the population were as small as it is today? The answer is that before the Europeans arrived, the island had ten times as many inhabitants as it now has—4 or 5 thousand would be a conservative estimate. We know this from data given by its first European visitors and the early missionaries.

Again, are these statues as old as has been said? Certain writers have dated them as far back as 1000 B. C. There are even some who think that they might have been in existence 10,000 years ago. But the weight of general evidence is against these views. Although their material is a relatively soft stone, they still retain sharp outlines, and the hammer marks are still noticeable on them. As the winds blow with relentless force over the island, and rains are both frequent and violent, if the carving had been done thousands of years ago, it could not be in such good condition as it is today. Tradition seems to indicate that the Polynesian ancestors of the present inhabitants came to the island and settled it in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A. D. All things considered, I do not think the statues can be more than five or six centuries old. But no definite date can be set for them.

The figures of stone that stood so high above the shores of Easter Island, and in such striking formation that it is no wonder they amazed the old navigators, have attracted more attention than the other mysterious objects to which I have already referred—the wooden tablets with rows of strange signs incised on them. But these curious pieces of wood have also given rise to much speculation. They were bought from the natives by the missionaries in the early days of their work, and ever since they have been thought to contain a real script which, if it could be read, would prove a key to the island's mysteries.

The first white man to discover the tablets was Monseigneur Jaussen, French Bishop of Tahiti, in 1866. As he was looking at a piece of

7: Anonymous T-5 (1770)1908
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the cotton plant would yield, as the country is very temperate: and wheat, garden plants, pot-herbs, &c. They dye their cloaks yellow.

The number of the inhabitants, including both sexes, will be from about nine hundred to a thousand souls: and of these very few indeed are women,—I do not believe they amount to seventy—and but few boys. They are in hue like a quadroon, with smooth hair and short beards, and they in no way resemble the Indians of the South American continent; and if they wore clothing like ourselves they might very well pass for Europeans. They eat very little, and have few needs: they do altogether without liquor of any kind.

On the 21st at noon we put to sea from this Island of David: we sailed some 70 leagues to the Westward to see whether any more land lay in that direction.

On the 23rd we hauled to the Southward until we reached the lat. 38° 30′ and long. 263° 31′, where we arrived on the 29th. On this track, on the 24th, in lat. 29° 30′, long. 261° 30′ at 6 in the afternoon, we saw ten or twelve white birds, and terns, and again some godwits, an indication of some island. The Commodore decided not to search for it at this juncture, deeming that the time was already short for going to Chiloe, and intending to look for it on the return voyage as the latitude was one in which the quest might be pursued at any season of the year.

From the longitude of 263° 31′ we stood away East as far as 281° along the parallel of 38½°, without meeting with any sign; and from that position we proceeded to Chiloe.

[Here this Journal ends; but a note is appended to it in one of the two MS. copies at the Academy of History, to the following effect:—

"This is a copy of the one which the aged Captain and Pilot of these seas, Don Domingo Josef Vasqués, had in

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
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Mr. Hodges, Dr. Sparrman, and my father aſſociated with them, ſo that the whole party conſiſted of twenty-ſeven men. 1774. MARCH. 175X

After breakfaſt I accompanied captain Cook and ſeveral officers aſhore, where we found about two hundred inhabitants aſſembled, amongſt whom were fourteen or fifteen women, and very few children. It was impoſſible for us to gueſs at the cauſe of this diſproportion in the number of the different ſexes; but as all the women we ſaw were very liberal of their favours, I conjectured at that time, that the married and the modeſt, who might be ſuppoſed to form the greater part, did not care to come near us, or were forced by the men to ſtay at their dwellings in the remote parts of the iſland. Thoſe few who appeared were the moſt laſcivious of their ſex, that perhaps have ever been noticed in any country, and ſhame ſeemed to be entirely unknown to them; our ſailors likewiſe diſclaimed all acquaintance with modeſty, for nothing but the ſhadow of the gigantic monument ſcreened them from the ſun. 175X 161 175X 834

Mr. Patton, lieutenant Clerke, and myſelf left the ſea-ſide, where the concourſe was greateſt, and took a walk into the country. The heat of the ſun was very violent, the beams being reverberated from the broken ground, and there was not a ſingle tree to give us ſhelter. My companions had taken their fowling-pieces in hopes of meeting with ſome birds; but they were greatly diſappointed, there 175X being

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
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deteſtable roads, where not a ſingle tree appeared to give us ſhelter from the ſcorching ſun. I rewarded my friendly conductors with all the Taheitee cloth, and iron ware, which I had about me, and arrived ſafely on board with the party." 1774. MARCH. 175 X

From this narrative it is evident, that the moſt diligent enquiries on our part, have not been ſufficient to throw a clear light on the ſurpriſing objects which ſtruck our eyes in this iſland. We may however, attempt to account for thoſe gigantic monuments, of which great numbers exiſt in every part; for as they are ſo diſproportionate to the preſent ſtrength of the nation, it is moſt reaſonable to look upon them as the remains of better times. The niceſt calculations which we could make, never brought the number of inhabitants in this iſland beyond ſeven hundred *, who, deſtitute of tools, of ſhelter, and clothing, are obliged to ſpend all their time in providing food to ſupport their precarious exiſtence. It is obvious that they are too much occupied with their wants, to think of forming ſtatues, which would coſt them ages to finiſh, and require their united ſtrength to erect. Accordingly, we did not ſee a ſingle inſtrument among them on all our excurſions, which could have been of the leaſt uſe in maſonry or ſculpture. 174 532 [161] [412]

* The Spaniards in the S. Lorenzo, and frigate Roſalia, make the population of Eaſter Iſland amount to between two and three thouſand; but it may be doubted whether they examined the interior country, as well as our people. See Mr. Dalrymple's Letter to Dr. Hawkeſworth.

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

an unfinished condition; that many more are to be found in the quarries, both inside the crater and on its outer slope, in all stages of development; and inferring from this that the workmen suddenly ceased their labors, the thought readily suggests itself, in explanation of the mystery, that either Rana Roraka or one of the neighboring volcanoes suddenly entered into a state of activity, threw out these showers of stones and, probably destroying many lives, stopped the labors of the workmen, which were thenceforth never resumed. Perhaps, too, the same calamity overthrew many of the idols, of which not one is now standing on its pedestal, laid waste the island, and wrought the destruction of the trees which once adorned it, and from the period of the occurrence of that disaster, the time of which can only be remotely guessed at, dates the decadence of the ancient people of Te Pito te henua. 174 172

The soil of the island is very rich and productive, scant and unpromising as it may appear in many places, and with proper clearing and cultivation, and the planting of the appropriate varieties of food, such as could be stored for consumption during the dry season, supplemented by the sustenance to be derived from the supplies of fish taken, with which the waters abound, a very large population might, no doubt, be maintained. 174

As to the supply of water requisite for such a number of people, objection on that ground is not insuperable. Diligent search was made by the writer for the remains of cisterns, or any other evidences which they might have left of having had reservoirs for the storage of the precious fluid. None such were to be seen anywhere, and yet they might have possessed them, but of so perishable a character that all traces have long since been obliterated. It seems certain that they had no knowledge of any cement; it is not likely, therefore, that their reservoirs would have been built of stone. Then, too, there remains the fact of the immense bodies of water stored in these natural cisterns, the craters, particularly of Rana Kao. Here is a volume of water, at the present time at least 300 feet in depth, with a circumference at the surface of 2½ miles, and, if the parts of the crater visible above the water line be extended downward, probably conical in shape. A moment's consideration will show that here is a supply of water sufficient for an almost unlimited number of beings for an indefinite period. It may easily be imagined, also, that measures were most likely taken to maintain its purity, and that a people as intelligent as they appear to have been had some device for obviating the labor of transportation to the top of the crater. 174 312

From what has been said it would appear that, even at the present day, the physical characteristics and natural conditions governing the island are not incompatible with the existence and well-being of a large population. I was not surprised, therefore, when Mr. Salmon informed me that from 1850 to 1860 the number of inhabitants was 161 174

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
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estimated at 20,000, although other calculations give much smaller figures. I am of the opinion that in the days of the image and platform builders the population might have been even larger.

About the year 1863 the Peruvians carried off from the island in 15 vessels, as it is alleged, 5,000 of the inhabitants as agricultural laborers in Peru and to work the guano deposits of the Chincha Islands. By reason of the odium attached to this proceeding, the Peruvian Government, some time afterwards, was induced to return those who had not succumbed to their treatment and altered conditions of life. Smallpox broke out among these on the return voyage. It is stated that all except two died, and the disease, spreading among the people ashore, ravaged the island, many deaths resulting. Of those carried off by the Peruvians one old man, Pakomeo, who was taken to the Chinchas, and whom we saw, still survives, the last of the unfortunates.

Down to the year 1861 cannibalism is said to have been practiced by the natives. In that year a Jesuit mission was established on the island, at which time the population numbered about 1,500. Through the influence and teachings of the missionaries an almost radical change was wrought in the manners, habits, and character of the people, and, to a certain extent at least, they adopted the customs of civilized life.

When H. M. S. *Topaze* visited the island in 1868 there were but about 900 natives left, of whom less than 300 were females, with the numbers still rapidly declining, the proportion of deaths to births being given as 3 to 1. About the year 1875 some 500 were removed to Tahiti under contract to work on the sugar plantations of that island.

In the year 1878 the missionaries, who had done admirable work among them, departed from the island, taking with them about 300 of the people, who settled Gambier Archipelago.

When H. M. S. *Sappho* touched at the island in 1882 it was reported that but 150 of the inhabitants were left.

On the occasion of the *Mohican's* visit I received from Mr. Salmon, who had a complete census, with the names of every man, woman, and child on the island, the following summary:

Natives	155
Foreigners	11
Total number of inhabitants	166
Native men	68
Native women	43
Boys under 15 years of age	17
Girls under 15 years of age	27
Total number of natives	155
Tahitians	6
English	2
Americans	2
Frenchmen	1
Total number of foreigners	11

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
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It will be seen from the above that, at the present time, among the children there is a preponderance of girls. The population is now reported at a standstill, the deaths and births about equaling each other in point of numbers. The average number of children to a family is given as three.

The age of puberty may be placed at 15 years in the male and 13 years in the female.

In color they are of a light brown, approaching here our lighter mulattos, the parts (face, neck, hands, etc.) exposed to the weather being always somewhat darker.

They have fine, jet-black hair, which may be wavy or straight (never "kinky"), and which is worn in variable styles, according to the taste of the owner, usually short among the men, and in plaits, down the back, among the women. They never decolorize it with lime nor trim it in any fanciful manner, as is the case in the Samoan Group and other South Sea islands. The beards of the men, which are never very heavy, correspond in these respects with the hair. There are several venerable looking gray-haired and gray-bearded old men among them. I saw no bald-headed ones, with a single exception. This was in the case of an old man who had been a cannibal, and, curiously enough, for generally throughout the islands they are very reticent on this subject, boasted of the number of human beings off whose flesh he had made a savory meal. When asked how he liked "long pig" he smacked his lips and expressed a regret that he could no longer enjoy the luxury. His expression and appearance were in keeping with his hideous appetite, for a more villainous-looking knave does not exist on the island.

The Rapa Nuiis may be considered a long-lived people. The oldest man and chief on the island, Mati by name, the patriarch of the Rapa Nuiis, does not know his actual age, but is certainly over 90 years old, and his wife, Maukua, of whom a photograph was taken, bears him close company in that as well as in other respects. The last king of the Rapa Nuiis, Maurata, also called Kaimokoe, was captured by the Peruvians, carried to the Chincha Islands, and died in 1864. His nearest descendant and successor, a nephew named Kaitae, is 79 years old. The last survivor of Peruvian captivity, Pakomeo, who was also photographed, must number at least the Biblical threescore and ten. These, with a few others not mentioned, may be considered a remarkable showing among so small a number of people, and proves not only that the original stock must have been a good one, but that their climate, surroundings, and mode of life were promotive of longevity.

In stature they are not a large race. There are a few, mainly among the older men, who are tall, erect, straight, spare in build, 6 feet or thereabouts in height, but the remainder, including the women, are smaller, and they may be classed as a small-boned, medium-sized people. They are not robust, apparently, neither are they very muscular; on the contrary, most of them present rather a slight, delicate, feeble appearance,

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to lie around and gossip, to smoke, to sit and "moon" over the industry, the greatness, and the monuments of his ancestors, the degeneracy and decadence of his race, perhaps, and his own utter and ineradicable worthlessness individually. Natural covetousness and desire for the possession of lucre may tempt him to serve the white man for a time, but he soon tires of his work, which speedily becomes irksome to him. And while he may exert himself a trifle occasionally, in the way of fishing, or in the cultivation of an 8 by 10 patch of sugar cane, taro, and sweet potato, it is only as a matter of necessity, to keep body and soul together, and he infinitely prefers idleness and the enjoyment of his *dolce far niente*.

Intoxicating drinks of any description, even kava, so common in the islands to the westward, are unknown to these people, and neither do Mr. Salmon, or the other foreign residents, keep any liquors in their possession. While, therefore, it is true that here, as elsewhere among uncivilized peoples, contact with the European has been attended by their gradual extinction, it can not be said that all the usual factors obtain in this instance, since neither the venereal poison nor intoxicants exist on the island. Consequently, these can not be assigned as causes of the decadence of the Rapa Nuis. Deportation, forced and voluntary, smallpox, and customs, elsewhere mentioned in this paper, will explain their gradual extinction, in part, at least, while the fact remains that their seemingly inevitable destiny was vastly accelerated when the white man set foot upon their mysterious, mid-ocean island.

The rite of circumcision, so common in the other islands, is unknown here, nor does their language possess an equivalent word.

As may be inferred from the preponderance of the male over the female portion of the community the latter are in demand, and the supply not being equal to it, the women are a source of great solicitude; much consideration is shown them; they are fairly well taken care of, and are treated, generally, with kindness, not to say affection. Polygamy, under the circumstances, does not, of course, exist and celibacy, it may be said, only from necessity, since there are not enough females.

While it can not be truthfully claimed that polyandry, in the strict acceptation of the term, obtains among them, they have a custom which very nearly approaches that practice, as will appear presently.

At the present day the ceremonies of the church, measurably at least, govern their marriages; nevertheless the ancient custom still prevails, to a considerable extent, and in a few words it is this: When a boy arrives at the age of, say 12 years, his father looks about him for a suitable life-companion, of the opposite sex, for the young hopeful. Having discovered one to his liking the father proceeds to interview the parents of the damsel, who is perhaps of the same age, or more likely younger than her prospective lord, declares his intentions matrimonial and negotiations are then entered into. After a due amount of haggling as to the value of the girl, during which the parents of the

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impossible for him to rejoin us. He went back later to England, and fell in the service of his country in September 1915. The *Mana* returned to Juan Fernandez and waited there till the fear of further cases developing on board had passed. The island is strikingly beautiful, with high mountains, deep gorges, and wonderful vegetation. It has a few score inhabitants under the charge of one old gentleman as magistrate and some four gendarmes. Here the *Dresden* sought refuge after the battle of the Falkland Islands, and when found by our navy claimed that she was interned. The chief celebrity connected with the place is of course the renowned Alexander Selkirk. His cave is shown and also his look-out point on the crest of the dividing ridge of the island.

From Juan Fernandez we sailed westward for three weeks, and at length in the grey dawn of March 29 Easter Island was sighted. It was thirteen months since we had left Southampton, of which we had been 147 days under way. As our goal at last hove in view a hush fell over the party, broken by the despairing voice of the ship's cook, "I don't know how I am expected to make a fire on that island; there is no wood." He spoke the truth. Easter Island has probably never had much more than brushwood and shrubs; but to-day it is used as a cattle ranch by a Chilean Company, and even that vegetation has disappeared.

The island is of recent volcanic formation, triangular in shape and curiously symmetrical. The highest ground is in the northern angle where an extinct volcanic mass rises to 1700 feet. Both the eastern and western angles are also formed by old volcanoes. At these high points erosion has caused imposing vertical cliffs on the seaward side; elsewhere the shoreline consists of low cliffs only, rising to not more than 50 to 100 feet above sea-level. The main portion of the island is composed of sheets of lava in process of disintegration, across which walking is almost impossible, and riding a very slow process. It is diversified at intervals by cones of volcanic ash some hundreds of feet in height, each with its own small crater. Grass covers the whole area, sprouting up on the lower ground between the masses of lava and covering the hills in such manner as to give them a down-like appearance. A few of the craters have lakes, but there is not one surface stream, and the water-supply is a great difficulty. There is no safe anchorage, and after the *Mana* had landed the shore party and stores she was sent back to Chile for mails and fresh provisions. She made altogether seven trips between Easter Island and the mainland, covering in these passages alone 14,800 nautical miles.

The shore party consisted at this time of our two selves, Lieut. Ritchie, the yacht's engineer, who was also photographer, the cook, and for a short while a Chilean boy from Juan Fernandez. Our experiences on the island were of a more exciting nature than had been anticipated, but as they have already been told they need only brief mention now.

The native population is of Polynesian race, and numbers at the present time about 250. They are confined to the district on the western

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There is the same story of the native powers of appropriating the goods of the strangers. Cook says that they were "as expert thieves as any we had yet met with," and Pérouse, whose own hat they stole while helping him down one of the image platforms, is particularly aggrieved at such conduct, considering that he has given them sheep, goats, pigs, and other valuable presents; peace was only kept between the crew and the natives by official compensation being given the seamen for their lost property. 648

Here, however, the resemblance of these accounts with that of Roggeveen ends. The descriptions which are given by these later expeditions of the state of the country, and its facilities as a port of call, are very different from those of the Dutchmen. The Spaniards speak of it as being uncultivated save for some small plots of ground. The Englishmen are the reverse of enthusiastic. Forster calls it a "poor land," and Cook says that "no nation need contend for the honour of the discovery of this island, as there can be few places which afford less convenience for shipping." "Poultry" now consists of only a "few tame fowls"—later still we find that only one is produced. Pérouse, although he is not so depressed as Cook, tells us that only one-tenth of the land is cultivated. With regard to the population Roggeveen gives no number, and probably was not in a position to do so. The estimates made by the Spanish and English are very similar. Gonzalez puts it at nine hundred to one thousand, Cook at seven hundred; both of them, however, state that the number of women seen seemed to be disproportionately small. La Pérouse, writing of course some years later, speaks of the number as two thousand and has seen many women and children. Both English and French are interested to find that the language is similar to that spoken elsewhere in the Pacific. 241 [231] 160 [197]

Again, in dealing with the state of the monuments and the way in which they were regarded, the impressions of the later observers differ greatly from those of Roggeveen. The Spaniards do not tell us very much. They saw from the sea what they thought were bushes symmetrically put up on the beach, and dotted about inland; later they found that they were in reality statues, and they wondered particularly how their crowns, which they observed were of a different material, were raised into place. It was one of the Spanish officers who states, as recorded at the beginning of this book, that the seashore was lined with stone 532

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brought the last two missionaries was a certain Captain Dutrou Bornier. He had been attracted by the place, and, having made financial arrangements with the mercantile house of Brander in Tahiti, settled himself on the island and proceeded to exploit it commercially. Title-deeds were obtained from the natives in exchange for gifts of woven material. The remaining population was gathered together into one settlement at Hanga Roa, the native name for the shore of Cook's Bay. This was the state of things when H.M.S. *Topaze* touched in 1868 and carried off the two statues now at the British Museum.

Dutrou Bornier had at first spoken enthusiastically of the work of the missionaries; later, however, the not unknown struggle arose between the religious and secular powers. According to the accounts of the missionaries, they protested against the actions of Bornier in taking over two hundred natives, practically by force, and shipping them to Tahiti to work on the Brander plantations. Bornier retaliated by rendering their position impossible, and the Fathers ultimately received orders to transfer their labours to the Gambier islands. Jaussen tells us that their converts desired to accompany them, and that almost the whole population went on board with them. The captain, however, instigated by Bornier, refused to carry so many, and one hundred and seventy-five were sent back to the shore. This, therefore, "was the whole population" in 1871. We have not Bornier's account of the quarrel, but there seems to have been some justification for the attitude of the missionaries towards him, as five years later he was murdered by the natives, and, if current stories are to be believed, his end was well merited.

Subsequently one of the Branders lived at Mataveri, and Mr. Alexander Salmon, to whom the missionaries sold their interests, at Vaihu on the south coast.[1] The Salmon family had intermarried with the royal family of Tahiti, and the new resident was well aware of the value of antiquities. According to native accounts he organised a band to search the caves and hiding-places for articles of interest. They also state that he employed skilled natives to produce wooden objects connected with their older culture for sale to passing ships. He spoke the

[1] The above statement is made on the authority of Mr. John Brander of Tahiti. According to report of H.M.S. *Sapphe*, which visited the island in 1882, Salmon was then an agent of the Maison Brander.

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language of the island, and when the U.S.S. *Mohican* arrived in 1886, he was the source of much of the information which they subsequently published. It is an important but difficult matter to know how far the material thus gleaned thirty years ago was carefully obtained and reproduced. One or two of the folk-tales are still told very much as retailed by Salmon, but he appears to have taken little interest in the surviving customs and failed to understand them. The report of the *Mohican*, made by Paymaster Thomson, has been the only account of the island in existence with any pretention to scientific value.[1] The *Mohican* was there eleven days, and Thomson went rapidly round the island with a party from the ship. The amount of ground covered and work done is remarkable, although his statements are naturally not free from the errors inseparable from such rapid observation.

In 1888 the Chilean Government formally took possession. In 1897 M. Merlet, of Valparaiso, purchased from the representatives of Brander, Bornier, and Salmon, their interest in Easter Island, with the exception of a tract of land containing the village of Hanga Roa, which the Chilean Government acquired from the missionaries and retained in the interest of the inhabitants; this land covers a far larger space than the natives are able to utilise. The population is again increasing, as will have been seen from the fact that during our visit they numbered two hundred and fifty. M. Merlet subsequently sold his holding to a company, of which he became chairman.

Easter Island has had many names. That given by the Dutchman has become generally accepted, but the Spaniards christened it San Carlos, and in some maps it is termed "Waihu," a name of a part of the island erroneously understood as applying to the whole. A native name is Te Pito-te-henua, "*henua*" means usually "earth" and "*pito*" "navel."[2] Thomson says it was ascribed to the first comers. Elsewhere in the Pacific "*pito*" also means "end." Churchill holds the name signified simply "Land's End," and was applied to all these angles of the island, which was itself without a name.[3] Rapa-nui (or Great Rapa) is another native name for which various explanations are offered.

[1] *Smithsonian Report*, 1889.
[2] In the *Odyssey* Athene speaks of Odysseus as "in a sea-girt isle, where is the navel of the sea." (*Odyssey*, Bk. I., l. 50, Butcher & Lang.)
[3] *Easter Island. The Rapa-nui Speech.* W. Churchill, p. 3.

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of the primitive existence which continued on Easter Island till the middle of last century. It will be seen that the condition of the people on the coming of Christianity, as we were able to ascertain it, corresponded almost exactly with that described by the first visitors from Europe, more than a hundred years earlier. Such traditions as linger regarding the megalithic remains have already been alluded to earlier in this book, but attention will be drawn to the point whenever this line of research seems successful in throwing indirect light on the origin of the great works.

Mode of Life.—The present natives, in talking of old times, say that their ancestors were "as thick as grass," and stood up like the fingers of two hands with the palms together; a statement from which deduction must be made for pictorial representation. The early mariners never, as we have seen, estimate the population at more than two thousand, but the land could carry many more. Mr. Edmunds calculates that about half of the total amount (or some 15,000 acres) could grow bananas and sweet potatoes. Two acres of cultivated ground would be sufficient to supply an ordinary family.

Housing accommodation presented no great problem. Many slept in the open, and even to-day, in the era of Christianity and European clothes, a cave is looked upon as sufficient shelter. When on moving from our "town" to our "country" house we inquired where our attendants were to sleep, we were cheerfully informed "it was all right, there was a very good cave near Tongariki"—and this cave, called Ana Havea, became a permanent annexe to the establishment (fig. 124). Some of these caves had a wall built in front for shelter.

Houses, however, did exist, which were built in the form of a long upturned canoe; they were made of sticks, the tops of which were tied together, the whole being thatched successively with reeds, grass, and sugar-cane. In the best of these houses, the foundations, which are equivalent to the gunwale of the boat, are made of wrought stones let into the ground; they resemble the curbstones of a street pavement save that the length is greater. In the top of the stones were holes from which sprang the curved rods, which were equivalent to the ribs of a boat, and formed the walls and roof (figs. 84 and 85). The end stones of the house are carefully worked on the curve,